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REVIEWS AND CRITICISMS

Psycho-Motor Norms for Practical Diagnosis: A Study of the Seguin Form-Board, Based on the Records of 4,072 Normal and Abnormal Boys and Girls, with Yearly and Half-Yearly Norms. By *J. E. Wallace Wallin. Psychological Monographs,* vol. xxii, No. 2. August, 1916. Whole No. 97. Pp. 102. $1.00.

The idea of this study is indicated by the title. Dr. Wallin applied the Sequin form-board, as modified by Norsworthy and by Goddard to 446 clinic cases observed by him at Pittsburgh and St. Louis to 1,429 school children at Pittsburgh and to 308 epileptics. He has also incorporated in some of his tables data from Sylvester's study of 1,588 children and from Goddard's study of 250 children.

Each child made three trials, in each of which he was urged to do his best. His time was taken with a stop watch from the touching of the first block to the correct placing of the last one; also, a record was made of every false move made, though the study deals practically entirely with the time scores.

The original data are given in very extensive form in a series of tables comprising the final (seventh) chapter of the monograph. Chapter I explains the purpose and method of investigation. Wallin regards the form-board as a most useful device, as "a test of form perception, movement and intelligence—that is, of psycho-motor development." Intelligence, he says, is measured because the test "requires a rapid adjustment to a novel and complicated situation," but in the next paragraph goes on to say, "we need comprehensive scales of motor capacity no less than of intellectual development," which sounds as if the form-board was not much concerned with intellectual development.

In any event, he says rightly that tests are of little value diagnostically unless fortified with reliable age norms and unless the dependence of these norms on other factors, like sex, mental capacity, etc., is also known. The remaining chapters deal with these dependencies.

Chapter II deals with the dependence on age. Speed with the form-board increases with chronological and with mental age, more rapidly in the earlier years, when semi-yearly norms are feasible, more slowly in the later years (after 12), when bi-yearly norms are enough, and at least to 17, though with seeming interruptions at the ages 8 and 13. One rather striking fact is that the averages for normal reported by Wallin are almost invariably faster than those reported by Sylvester or by Goddard—to take an extreme instance, at 4 years Sylvester gives about 46 seconds, Goddard about 39 seconds, Wallin about 29 seconds as standard performance. The discrepancies amount to roughly 1.5 years in age assignments—enough to interfere with clinical inferences, it would seem. Wallin thinks the difference is due to the circumstance that his cases averaged higher in intelligence and were incited more to do their best at every trial. Since Sylvester's and

Goddard's norms are reprinted here, the user of the form-board can take his choice.

Chapter III deals with the dependence on intelligence. The main conclusions are: Bright surpass average and average surpass dull children; children of the same mental age, but differing chronological age differ little in psycho-motor efficiency (the factor of chronological age neutralizes the factor of intelligence); brighter children show their superiority more in the first or second than in the third trial (probably because of making a more rapid initial adjustment).

Chapter IV deals with sex differences. Boys are slightly superior to girls (average about 1.3 seconds), though this difference is lessened in the subnormal. The data are insufficient to show which sex is relatively the more variable. Tentatively, it may be inferred that subnormal males are more dangerous than subnormal females, but that the abler males surpass the abler females. The male superiority is greater in the first or the second than in the third trial, hence, Wallin says, it is desirable to make more than one trial, though the logic is not clear to the reviewer. That the sexes both seem to reach resting plateaus at the same years, 8 and 13, is hard to reconcile with other phenomena of sex growth.

Chapter V deals with the effect of repetition. There is a marked gain in speed from the first to the second and a less gain from the second to the third trial. The gain is greater with subnormal children because their first trial is so slow. Here, again, Wallin argues that the best score to use is the shortest one (almost always the third), though it would seem to me obvious from his own figures that subnormality is best brought out in the first trial. Practice curves, in any case, differ with degree of mentality.

Chapter VI deals with variability of form-board performance, which is considerably greater for subnormal than for normal children, and which decreases from trial to trial and with increasing chronological or mental age.

This monograph represents a deal of tedious work and its tabular summary will be welcomed by other investigators. It remains to be seen how much use can be made of it for the "practical diagnosis" specified in its title.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONDUCT. By *S. A. Martin.* Boston, Richard G. Badger, 1916. Pp. 238. $1.50.

"Men change and times change with them, but the principles of moral truth are older than the earth, and shall abide when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the heavens shall be, as an outworn garment, folded up and laid aside, still the laws of nature, moral laws as well as mathematical or physical, shall abide, steadfast and unchanged" (p. 20). That moral truth is immutable and eternal, fixed in the constitution of things, ready-made and awaiting discovery by the moral sense of man—such is the ethical position of Professor Martin. Although he may claim descent from a long and honorable